HOLLYWOOD DJINN . . . by NELSON ALGREN

THE Nation

July 25, 1953
20¢

Protestant Social Policy

IT'S NOT UN-AMERICAN

by F. Ernest Johnson

The Labor Press — *Ben Pearse*

Summer in Paris — *J. A. del Vayo*

Company Town — *Jerry Dale*

EVERY WEEK SINCE 1865

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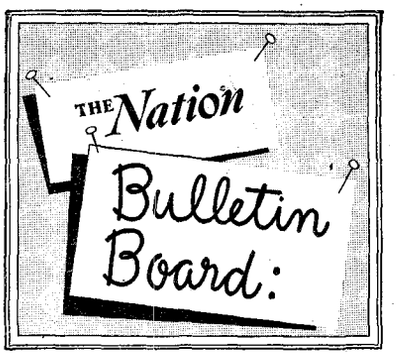
Letters



FRIEND of ours complained the other day that Americans don't care much any more what happens to civil liberties and other such things. What he needed, we told him, was a shot in the arm—the kind you get looking at letters from *Nation* readers. Wish we had room to publish many more letters than we do; but we want everybody who writes us to know that the letters are warmly appreciated by the editors.

Sending a fine piece on Latin America (scheduled for August publication), Waldo Frank, one of America's distinguished authors, writes us: "The premise of specific articles must be sound; this means the organ in which the articles appear must be sound—and that is why I shall be glad to write for *The Nation*. . . . Not in my time, at least, has *The Nation* seemed to me so important as it is now."

The Leland Olds series on the grab for atomic power by private companies was placed in the *Congressional Record* by Congressman John Blatnik. . . . Senator Estes Kefauver notes that Bruce Catton's piece about the attacks upon T. V. A. and similar projects was "very good and certainly timely." . . . In his staff bulletin, "Notes on Current Reading," Dr. Karl Menninger praises Howard K. Beale's recent *Nation* article (Teacher as Rebel) as "superior . . . commended to all teachers." The Beale piece drew wide comment, including a front-page column by William T. Evjue, editor of the Madison *Capital-times*.

Mrs. Marie Sien Halpenny, from San Antonio, Texas, tells us more about the fight down there against efforts of self-appointed guardians of the American way of life to "brand" books in that city's libraries. Mrs. Halpenny, a writer herself, is chairman of the American Activities Committee that was formed by many of San Antonio's leading citizens to prevent "book-burnings." Another Texas reader, Lorette Malone, says she's been taking *The Nation* for years and regrets that we can't reach millions of people the way the "one-party" press does. (We deplore it too.) M. S.

Wrong Emphasis Charged

Dear Sirs: The Nation's new book-review policy of covering one book or a small group of related books more than adequately and giving only brief notices to others must place a great burden on the editor in charge. It must be very difficult to absorb and evaluate the constant stream of current literature and come up with the "most significant" for the big review each week. Reader disagreement on this score must perhaps be expected, but I want to register a difference of judgment with the editor on June 6.

In the issue which teamed Peter Viereck and Sidney Hook in the forefront with an extensive summary, Scott Buchanan and Bertrand Russell were dismissed to the rear with a paragraph each. Now I cannot speak for Mr. Russell's "Impact of Science on Society," which I have not read, but I have read Mr. Buchanan's "Essays in Politics," and it seems to me that *The Nation's* comment misses the point. The brief review makes vague reference to what actually is a scholarly and penetrating examination of our economic and political system, of the origin and growth of what has become our irresponsible corporation structure in America, and of the breakdown of the institutions of consent necessary to a self-governing society. Mr. Buchanan tells us to look beyond our T. V. A., the most advanced corporate body in America today, and suggests some of the ways we may do it.

The reviewer's conclusion on this? "In the light of the deep-rooted frustration and apathy everywhere apparent in American society today," he writes, "one may feel a degree of skepticism about the possibility of such a remedy."

I wonder if it has occurred to the editor that no small part of this "deep-rooted frustration" may be caused by journals that inflate the confusions of Messrs. Viereck and Hook, and consign a Buchanan to the intellectual bull-pen. . . .

I have little to say against the review job John W. Ward did on the Hook and Viereck books, but I am wondering if knocking down intellectual straw men is a luxury sport that liberals intent on doing some real stuff in the mid-twentieth century should afford. One expects more from *The Nation* . . . if it is to be a positive force in the peaceful revolution that many of us hope for in American life. Buchanan is throwing out some ideas that I believe can really help us to progress. . . . It seems to me that *The Nation* has a responsibility in this direction too.

Swanton, Vt. BERNARD G. O'SHEA

. . . and the Defense

Possibly *The Nation* erred in not carrying a full-length review of Dr. Buchanan's book, although, as Mr. O'Shea kindly admits, the task of selection is a difficult one, especially for a journal of such limited dimensions. In any case the editors fully recognize their responsibility to bring to the forefront works which develop ideas that "can really help us to progress." Perhaps Mr. O'Shea's excellent letter will serve as an adequate supplement to the brief comment we carried on "Essays in Politics."

We would not agree, however, that the treatment of the Hook and Viereck books was merely knocking down "intellectual straw men." Both authors are controversial figures with enough standing in the literary and academic world to warrant analysis and, in this case, sharp attack.—EDITORS THE NATION.

Don't Cry, Baby

Dear Sirs: Regarding the very worthwhile recent symposium of young writers, may this as yet unpublished writer add a word?

James Jones was coming close to the truth when he said that the trouble with writers today is that they are so unlike the Elizabethans. This is true, of course, but it is like saying that the trouble with some bush-league outfielder in Coal Mine, Pennsylvania, is that he's not Mickey Mantle.

There is no question that the vitality of our writers, as of our other creative artists, is getting a wonderful veneer of neutralizing agent on the analyst's couch, or if not there, then in the rarified dogmatization chamber wherein the Gospel according to St. Marx is handed on, or if not there, then from Rome via special pipe line to the Big Boss himself. . . .

Jones is absolutely right when he speaks of the tragedy of the American writer today. He is a by-product of a tragic period when writers are absolutely the last left to try to spark the dying

(Continued on inside back cover)

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THE Nation
EVERY WEEK SINCE 1865

EDITORIALS

The Shape of Things

The Truce Is the Pay-Off

If the Communists sign a Korean truce on the basis of General Harrison's professed confidence in Syngman Rhee's willingness to "collaborate," they must want a truce badly. The terms of the Robertson-Rhee agreement have not been made public and the radio-TV report presented to the country last week by Messrs. Dulles and Robertson told the Communists in effect that they could buy a truce-in-a-poke or go on fighting. As for Dr. Rhee himself, he has given no assurances beyond indicating that he will refrain from disrupting the truce for ninety days. After that, he considers himself free to begin "unifying Korea by force"—which is to say, invading North Korea.

The power put into last week's bloody drive southward was at first taken to mean that the Communists were not buying the truce as qualified by Syngman Rhee. But apparently they are buying it, in which case their advance could have been intended as a costly demonstration of what would hit the South Koreans if Dr. Rhee should sabotage the coming armistice.

The truce, of course, is the pay-off. If it is signed no one will be inclined to cavil over details. But it seems to us that the U.N. should keep an eye on the unregenerate and uncommitted president of South Korea. He can still make trouble, and in our opinion he intends to.

The U. N. and the Truce

Suppose the Rhee regime should attack or threaten the neutral commission appointed to supervise the truce? Suppose it should interfere with the Indian troops assigned to police the prisoner-of-war exchange? Suppose no agreement is reached during the ninety-days grace Rhee has generously allowed for the political unification of Korea, and he sends his ROK forces north across the armistice line? A three-years' war resulted from North Korea's aggression against South Korea. Will the United Nations allow a South Korean attack on North Korea to go unpunished—especially an attack made in defiance of an armistice to which the U.N. is a party? When is an aggression not an aggression—when it is against a Communist state?

These questions unfortunately are not academic. Mr. Robertson expressed confidence in President Rhee's "intention to carry out in good faith his assurances" to him. This may be the State Department's view, but the U.N. should insist on certain safeguards. First of all Syngman Rhee should be required to sign the truce. Second, whatever penalties are to be imposed upon the Communists in case of a violation should apply automatically to the South Koreans as well. With matters such as these unresolved the quicker the U.N. General Assembly is called into session, the better the hope for peace in Korea.

Blackballed

Comments in a *Wall Street Journal* story of the previous day may well have goaded C. I. O. President Walter P. Reuther into releasing to the press on July 15 a copy of a letter he had written to Presidential Assistant Sherman Adams on May 5 concerning the President's refusal to accept his suggestion that John Edelman be named Assistant Secretary of Labor. "The mighty C. I. O.," to quote from the *Journal* story, "has fallen to the lowest political estate in its history. . . . The giant union's once-potent voice in national councils is fading to an almost unheeded whisper." The Edelman case would seem to confirm this appraisal. No issue was raised about Mr. Edelman's competence or his loyalty; nor was it contended that he was a security risk. What the Administration feared, as Mr. Adams frankly admitted, was "what certain people in Congress" might make of the fact that Mr. Edelman had managed the La Follette-Wheeler campaign in Pennsylvania in 1924!

But by treating the C. I. O. like a disfranchised share-cropper, the Administration may be inviting trouble. This fall the C. I. O. is scheduled to launch a million-dollar-a-year program of monthly television and daily radio newscasts to step up the tempo of local political action. By blackballing the C. I. O.'s sole nominee the Administration may have precipitated a rebellion that might otherwise have been delayed until the 1954 political season was far advanced.

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"Good Old American Tradition"

Senator McCarthy is a specialist in simple situations: those who are not for him are against him; whatever is not black must be white. Last week the Senator faced a new situation and was as puzzled by it as a dog would be with a bone that jumped and did cartwheels. The Senator encountered two witnesses who declined to cooperate with him but refused to invoke the Fifth Amendment. Moreover, one of them—the mild-mannered editor of the *Monthly Review*—looked him in the eye and said, "I am a Marxist and a Socialist." Harvey O'Connor, the other heretic, declined to answer The Question on the ground that it was beyond the scope of the committee's powers, irrelevant to any valid legislative purpose, and clearly precluded by the First Amendment. After denying that he is or ever was a Communist, Leo Huberman refused to answer any further questions "concerning what I think, or what I believe, or with whom I associate. That, in accordance with good old American tradition, is my own business."

In this instance Senator McCarthy's preference for the simple situation is likely to deceive him. He will discover, if he presses charges against either man, that there are a great many people in this country who know, admire, and respect Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Huberman. He will discover, too, that important sections of the labor movement, both here and abroad, will be deeply disturbed by this harassment of two men who have long and distinguished records in the field of labor education and as labor historians and pamphleteers.

We note with greatest regret the death of Thomas Riggs, Jr., assistant professor of literature at Princeton University, who struck his head on a rock when diving and was instantly killed. Not long ago Mr. Riggs agreed to serve as *The Nation's* poetry critic. His first and only contribution, an excellent commentary on five contemporary poets, appeared in the spring book issue.

Mr. Dulles Thinks Twice

Washington

THE Eisenhower Administration and more particularly the State Department have had second thoughts about the meaning of Lavrenti Beria's downfall. The "guidance" given by the Administration to the American press and public soon after the spectacular news came from Moscow was a mess. There is a certain defense for editors and other journalists who under stress of deadlines rush snap judgments into print, but no such compulsion thrusts itself upon the State Department.

On the morning after the Beria news broke, Secretary Dulles called into his office the department's top advisers and leading members of the staff engaged in research on Soviet affairs. The questions asked that morning were

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those being asked everywhere in the less rarified atmosphere outside:

Was the key to Beria's disgrace to be found in the international situation, notably in the deterioration of the Communist position in Berlin, East Germany, and other satellite areas?

Or was it to be sought on the Soviet domestic scene, perhaps in Beria's relationship to agricultural issues or the national-minorities problem?

Was there a third explanation—namely, that policy played a minor, possibly even a negligible, part and that the struggle for personal power was the real issue?

Finally, what conclusions should be drawn concerning the future course of Soviet foreign relations?

The results would have been better if the group in Mr. Dulles's office had waited at least a few hours before attempting even a tentative judgment. The men seated there had before them only the terse communiqué of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party announcing Beria's removal, and a fragment of *Pravda's* editorial. But Mr. Dulles was to sit down that afternoon with Lord Salisbury and M. Bidault to open their series of meetings, and since the Beria story was sure to be in the front of their minds, he felt he must start the Foreign Ministers' discussion with comment on the Moscow developments.

His advisers in the morning plumped for the theory that Beria's ruin must be ascribed to events abroad, especially to the Communist troubles in East Germany. Viewing Beria as the exponent of Russia's softer line, Mr. Dulles brought to the Foreign Ministers' meeting a belief that the Kremlin would now return to its former tough, aggressive behavior.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT experts rested their conclusion on two major premises. As far back as 1938 Beria had been brought in to halt the great purge after his predecessors, Yezhov and Yagoda, had died before firing squads. That in itself seemed to label Beria as "softer." Moreover, reports reaching the United States intelligence services during the war, though never confirmed, had indicated that Beria was urging a separate peace with Germany—again the softer line. Second, in the immediate past and since Stalin's death Beria's pronouncements had stressed the liberty of the individual and the theme that outstanding differences with the West could be settled by peaceful negotiation. And in reversing the verdict against the Kremlin doctors, Beria had come out against the promoters of racial discord.

It was in this setting that a high United States official emerged from the Foreign Ministers' first session and talked to American journalists behind closed doors. It was here that the press got its "authoritative" indication that Dulles, Salisbury, and Bidault were in harmony in believing the Beria purge probably foreshadowed a return to a harder, more aggressive policy in Moscow. This prediction was then splashed in headlines across almost all American newspapers. It was of little avail when a member of the British delegation informed the correspondents that there had obviously been confusion between the opinion Dulles had expressed at the meeting and the views of his British and French colleagues.

Newsmen were not told about a touch of acerbity which developed over another aspect of Mr. Dulles's remarks at the same meeting. The Secretary of State announced that Ambassador Charles Bohlen had pulled off a major scoop by reporting the purge of Beria several days before it was officially revealed by Moscow. Salisbury and Bidault blandly replied that the British and French embassies in Moscow had also conveyed this information to their governments well in advance of its official disclosure. Nobody bothered to remind Mr. Dulles that ever since June 27 the world's press had been speculating about Beria's vacant chair at the Bolshoi Theater at the performance of the "Dekabristi" ballet on that date.

WHAT REALLY is striking about these items is that the State Department has now abandoned its first interpretation of the Beria affair and reversed its own conclusions. The department's experts no longer maintain that Beria's eclipse marks the end of the Kremlin's softer policy. They have awakened to the truth that since his arrest on June 27 there has been a series of conciliatory moves within the Soviet bloc.

Hungary's concessions to its restive people came on July 4. A lesser concession by the Prague regime on July 6 annulled the sharp penalties for workers' absenteeism. It was after Beria's downfall, too, that the Rumanian government abolished farmers' debts to the state for failure to deliver grain and cattle quotas. These and other manifestations clearly supported the earlier signs that a more accommodating mentality in the Kremlin had resulted from a collective decision and that Beria was simply carrying out the wishes of the dominant Communist leadership. By this time the State Department's experts also had before them the complete *Pravda* editorial on Beria, reaffirming the Soviet government's declaration that "all unsolved international questions under dispute can be solved by negotiations among the interested countries" and foreshadowing continuance of "the new peaceful initiative by the Soviet government."

Events had given Beria an opportunity to move into the spotlight as the great conciliator. There was no hint in his public demeanor that the softer policies being applied emerged from the balance of power among party, army, and police. Beria had been presenting himself as the creator, not merely as one of the executors, of the policy of accommodation. Specialists on Russia in the

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State and Defense departments and the Central Intelligence Agency swung to the conclusion that Beria had "played his humane line too fast and too hard" to suit Malenkov, Molotov, and Bulganin.

The Washington experts had switched their position 180 degrees. They had discarded their earlier assumption that the disorders in East Berlin and East Germany provided the primary reason for liquidating Beria. Nor did they now accept the "internal" explanation—Beria's possible involvement in the debate on whether the Soviet peasant should be deprived of the right to sell part of his produce on the free market. In his article in *Bolshevik* last year Stalin had taken a stand against this method of supplementing the farmer's income and had advocated a barter system.

Washington officials also attached less weight to the role of the national-minorities problem in Beria's fate, although in one sense, they agreed, that issue—with several others—could have speeded his fall. By opposing the incitement of national and racial antagonisms, by helping to halt russification of the Ukraine and the Baltic states, Beria had again been promoting his own popularity to a degree which Malenkov and his colleagues found threatening. Beria appeared to them far too agile in capitalizing on the collective "appeasement" policies to strengthen his personal position in the country.

Finally came the changes in the police structure. The M. V. D. (Ministry of Internal Affairs) and M. G. B. (Ministry of State Security)—the two great police organs—were again merged after Stalin's death, and Beria once more was put in charge of their formidable combined apparatus. The same pattern was followed in all the Baltic republics, in Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Kazakstan. As this happened, Beria's cronies moved to the top. This explains the *Pravda* editorial's passage charging him with putting the M. V. D. before the party and government and selecting M. V. D. workers on the basis of "personal loyalty to himself."

So the top intelligence units of the Eisenhower Administration finally reached the conclusion that Premier Malenkov was waging the same fight to gain control of the state and party machine as Stalin had waged after Lenin's death almost thirty years ago. A personal struggle for power is seen as the base of the Malenkov-Beria conflict. The firm belief in Washington today is that the Kremlin will pursue its softer policy. The next test of this thesis will be the Western Foreign Ministers' meeting with Molotov in late September or October.

SUMMER IN PARIS

A Season of Surprises . . J. Alvarez del Vayo

Paris

NOW that the National Assembly has granted Premier Laniel a reprieve by voting new taxes and new economic and political powers for his Cabinet, I shall take time off to comment on a few interesting events of a different sort. Not even the worst political crisis can obliterate the Paris of art and intellect or dull the French taste for their unique values.

France has not yet made a complete political and economic comeback since World War II, but in the sphere of culture its recovery has been extraordinary. During the last two months, whenever I have had time, I have taken in interesting lectures at the Sorbonne, visited the theater, and seen several of the best art exhibitions of our time. In painting France still sets the pace.

There was an excellent retrospective show at the Petit Palais devoted to the Barbizon school, Courbet, and the Impressionists—Manet, Monet, Sisley, Renoir, and their followers. After the recent death of Raoul Dufy, an exhibition of his paintings traced the whole course of his interesting evolution from his early period of monumental conceptions, through the time when he was under the influence of Cézanne, until he developed a style so personal that it cannot be confused with any other—a delicate mixture of elements of painting and drawing at the service of an imagination which leads us through villages gay with flags, small harbors, ships, horse races, and street music into the very heart of France. All this, together with the memory of the man himself, friendly and understanding, with hardly an enemy, gave the exhibition a quality of profound sadness.

Naturally a Picasso exhibition, whenever it occurs, towers above all others. Any public appearance of Picasso is a sensation. The way in which even the people most opposed to his politics respond to the multifarious activities of this man of genius is in itself proof of the difference in the artistic atmosphere of Europe and America. It is not easy to imagine President Eisenhower lending the authority of his presence to the opening of an exhibition of a Communist painter. But it was President Einaudi of Catholic Italy who ceremoniously opened the Picasso exhibition in Rome. I had the good fortune to see this exhibition in which Picasso, through all possible forms of art, from the rigorously classical to compositions boldly anticipating the work that might come after him, displayed the full measure of his genius. All Rome paid homage to a painter whom an Italian critic, in a moment of exuberance, called the "Michelangelo of our time."

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Picasso has also held an exhibition in Paris which, while less comprehensive, included the most widely discussed of his recent productions—the two grandiose murals on the subject of war and peace. Here the painter of the Dove of Peace becomes a master of imprecation, cursing war with a force not equaled since Goya. From the pictures shown in Paris the struggle against the dehumanization of our epoch emerges as one of the most powerful motifs in Picasso's present work. In the anti-war painting the machine triumphs with the glorification of the new weapons by the warmongers. Every piece of metal created to kill men, every atomic technician at the service of destruction, is given a brutal and diabolic expression. But the future is also there, with the irresistible desire for peace destined to triumph over the machine. The dove and the lamb soar and leap in the midst of a gay humanity celebrating the victory of life over death. And beside this work, so characteristic of his recent years, stands Picasso himself, a man who constantly renews himself, becoming ever more vigorous and audacious. The Paris exhibition was not only an artistic success: the paintings brought more than a quarter of a million dollars, a sum no other artist can approach today.

PARIS IS ALSO a great international music center. The past season offered five or six fine orchestras, conductors like Furtwängler and Münch, soloists like Bockhaus and Arthur Rubinstein. The outstanding novelty was the Stravinsky opera, "Rake's Progress," with a libretto in the mood of Hogarth.

The season presented another surprise. The international piano and violin competition, inaugurated two years ago under the auspices of the famous French violinist Jean Thibaud, resulted in a triumph for the Soviet Union. Nelly Chkolnikova, who won the first prize for violin, was hailed by French critics as an artist of the rank of Heifetz and Menuhin. She is twenty-four years old and still a student at the Moscow Conservatory. Another Soviet violinist won the second prize. In the piano competition, when the first prize was also about to go to a Soviet artist, the jury engaged in a diplomatic maneuver to give him the second prize and the first to a competitor of another nationality. This

brought violent protests from sections of the public and the press. It required all the tact of Marguerite Long, who shares patronage of the competition with Thibaud, to end the incident. It was really impressive to see the most anti-Communist and anti-Soviet Paris newspapers arguing, in the name of artistic integrity, that the Soviet performers should be judged on their merits. The great Russian violinist, Oistrakh, and the pianist, Oborin, gave a series of recitals and played to crowded halls.

The Comédie Française and other theaters had a successful season, presenting works of Sartre, Mauriac, and others, but the great attraction was the Théâtre National Populaire. Its manager-director, Jean Vilar, assisted by an excellent company and employing new stage techniques which create a contact between the artists and a public hitherto unacquainted with good theater, has been producing plays in the provinces and the suburbs of Paris in large popular halls with great success. He uses a black background and a special kind of illumination which lends an enchanting air of legend and mystery to the action on the stage. His first big success was with "The Prince of Homburg," by Heinrich von Kleist, whose dreamy romanticism offered a great challenge to his talent as director. The brilliant acting of Gérard Philippe established this play and opened the way for new productions: "Lorensaccio," the revolutionary drama of the youthful De Musset; Shakespeare's "Richard II"; and finally the great success of recent months, another German play, "The Death of Danton." Its author, Georg Büchner, led a peasant uprising in Hessen in 1833. The play drew applause from the reactionaries and criticism from the left, starting a new controversy over the role of Danton in the French Revolution.

Even the staid French Academy had its exciting moment this season. The star turn was provided by Marshal Juin. His election to the Academy was not only a social event of the first magnitude but a political act which stirred all the passions that divide France today. In the few things Marshal Juin has written, mostly introductions to pamphlets, he has openly defended a tough policy toward anti-colonialist movements. His opponents also accuse him of marked coolness toward the Resistance during the struggle for liberation. His NATO post and his passionate defense of the Atlantic Pact have made him a focus of public controversy.

JUIN'S speech accepting membership in the Academy naturally aroused great expectations and he did not disappoint them. Utilizing the circumstance that the Tharaud brothers, whom he succeeded as a member and whom according to tradition he had to praise in his speech, had spent a long time in Morocco, he raised once more the thorny issue presented by that country. To the applause of a conservative audience, he expounded in a militant tone his views on colonialism in general and on the policy France should follow in Morocco. He advocated a strong hand against those who challenged the authority of France and was unsparing in his criticism of François Mauriac, a fellow-member of the Academy, who had expressed disapproval of certain acts of repression in Morocco in his column in the conservative *Figaro*.

The French press was none too kind toward the Marshal's incursion into politics under the cover of literature. The *Figaro* called it a partisan speech out of place at the French Academy, *Franc-Tireur* called it "provocative," and *Libération* made the caustic comment: "Marshal Juin at the French Academy does not, alas, mean that we have one academician the more and one warrior the less."

The incident has further increased the prestige of Mauriac, winner of a Nobel Prize for literature. No longer a young man, Mauriac has changed since the war from a writer of novels to one of the sharpest polemists of the French press. Only last month he spoke on the same platform with the Communist poet, Louis Aragon, in favor of a reprieve for the Rosenbergs.

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PROTESTANT SOCIAL POLICY

It's Not Un-American . . *by F. Ernest Johnson*

[*The extraordinary interest in the clergy displayed recently by Congressional investigating committees—reaching a climax this week with the calling up of Bishop Oxnam—focuses attention on the Protestant social creed. What is this creed? To what extent has it guided the country's social and political thinking?*

The Nation *herewith begins a series of three articles on the subject, each by a distinguished Protestant spokesman. F. Ernest Johnson, educator and social historian, has held important executive posts with the National and the Federal Council of Churches for many years. He is emeritus professor of education at Teachers College, editor of* Social Action, *and the author of many books, including "Foundations of Democracy" and "Wellsprings of the American Spirit."*]

NO ONE who is familiar with the Protestant denominations in the United States will expect to discover *the* Protestant position on anything important —not even on the Vatican! It is of the essence of the Protestant faith that the individual conscience is supreme. On all matters of political and social policy this means that the church may furnish guidance but no directives. Only among the small sects which maintain a group testimony and discipline is there anything approximating a corporate position on political and social questions.

This characteristic of what may be called the Protestant mentality is of much public significance. The Protestant churches would be politically dominant if there were any such thing as a "Protestant vote." Moreover, the Protestant emphasis on the authority of conscience and the "right of private judgment" puts a premium on independent action in the political sphere. It is even held to be a virtue to "vote for the man and not the party," a fact which has tended to make Protestants politically inept. For a naive faith in the power of "righteous" officials to prevail over well-established alliances and deeply intrenched interests brings swift disillusionment when political realities disclose themselves.

This does not mean, of course, that Protestants are not active in politics, and effectively so. It means, rather, that they seldom function politically *as* Protestants and that there is no Protestant "line" except in rare instances. Broadly speaking, Protestants behave politically in accord with secular sanctions and as members of secular groups. It seems safe to say that the political and social orientation of American Protestants approximates that of the socio-economic groups to which they belong. The extent to which American life is class-structured is a disputed question, but the point here is that religious affiliation *per se,* so far as Protestants are concerned is a negligible factor in determining political and social outlook. If Protestants tend to vote on the conservative side, as they seem to, it is because the members of Protestant churches tend to belong to those middle-class groups which, in turn, tend to vote that way.

IT SHOULD BE noted that in recent years evidence has accumulated that in some of the larger Protestant bodies, as well as the small sects, a considerable portion of the membership is drawn from the working class. Thus, the Baptist bodies are not very different from the Roman Catholic church in the class orientation of their members. This was reflected in the national election of 1944, according to statistical data gathered in connection with opinion polls, and, one may surmise, in that of 1948. The result in 1952 was a composite of factors many of which were not political in a strict sense.

It will occur at once, of course, to many readers that the Protestant churches have furnished the sinews of political warfare in behalf of certain causes. Prohibition was largely a Protestant enterprise. Also, the great crusade against war during the twenties and thirties was largely the result of the Christian pacifist movement fostered by some of the large Protestant communions as well as the small pacifist sects. Prohibition was, indeed, an example of the direct influence of a religious discipline on political action, but it was far from typical. As for the pacifist movement, though influential for a time, in the end it was ineffective politically, since when put to the test of imminent war the membership of the Protestant churches largely eschewed the pacifist philosophy.

These facts may give satisfaction to cynical persons, but they are just what should be expected in a democratic society whose churches are for the most part cross-sections of the population. The "prophetic" element in religion finds expression chiefly in small, disciplined groups. For the most part the Protestant denominations are not only large bodies but lay-controlled organizations whose corporate "position," if any, on a public question is determined by what the laity, not the clergy, think and feel. It has taken a good while for liberal Protestant leaders to learn that the more democratic a church is—that is, the wider the lay participation in control—the less social crusading there will be.

BUT IN SPITE of these conditioning factors which tend to make Protestantism conservative, it has had a liberalizing influence in American thought and life. The "social gospel" movement which got under way in the late nineteenth century fostered a concern for application of the Christian ethic to the structure of society as well as to personal living. Its classic expression is found in the "Social Ideals of the Churches," a document often referred to as the "social creed," formulated in 1908 and put in its present form in 1932. With the absorption of the Federal Council of Churches, which sponsored the document, in the National Council of

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Churches, this creed ceased to have any official status in Protestantism, for it has not as yet been reaffirmed. Yet I believe it carries a high degree of ethical sanction, except for two of its articles the insertion of which reflected the impact of the depression. One of these calls for "social planning" and the other for health insurance as a concomitant of social security. These ideas, which had a great measure of public support in the early thirties, would hardly find their way, without sharp limitation, into an official social creed formulated today. They illustrate the grievous hazard in the making of pronouncements for which a wide social sanction is claimed —the danger that they will reflect a contemporary mood rather than an abiding conviction.

The other fifteen articles set forth principles rather than specific measures or devices: for example, the ethical scrutiny of the acquisition and use of wealth; economic justice for every population group, with special reference to the farmer; the right to "organize for collective bargaining and social action"; abolition of child labor; racial equality; and civil liberties.

THIS SOCIAL CREED furnishes a framework within which the major Protestant bodies carry on their programs of social education and action. Recent official pronouncements indicate that their major social concerns are the preservation of human rights and fundamental freedoms, economic justice, the abolition of racial segregation, and the achievement of peace and international good-will through the United Nations. A few of the latest official utterances will illustrate the present mood.

The Methodist church, largest of the Protestant bodies, has long had a social creed of its own closely paralleling the "Social Ideals." Its General Conference attracted much attention last year by deleting the words "subordination of the profit motive to the creative and cooperative spirit." The change is a bit hard to interpret, since Christianity has always taught the subordination of acquisitive motives while recognizing their deep-rooted existence. Apparently much feeling had been aroused by the frequent use of the term "profit motive" in a context that suggested a repudiation of the profit economy as such. The action was all of a piece with a policy struggle over the status of the militant Methodist Federation for Social Action. It should be noted, however, that the revised paragraph includes the sentence: "We espouse no particular economic system, and refuse to identify Christianity with any economic order." In the quadrennial "Episcopal Address," always a notable document, the sixty-eight bishops of the church denounced communism but declared, "It is not Russia that is our real enemy but the evils in our modern society which Russia falsely offers to eradicate."

The Congregational Christian Churches at the meeting of the General Council in 1952 also came to grips with basic issues concerning social and political action centering in the policies of the denomination's Council for Social Action. Here again a former official declaration was "disclaimed"—a resolution passed in 1934 which condemned "our present competitive profit-seeking economy." That resolution was, on its face, a radical declaration, aimed not at chastening the "profit motive" but at fundamental change in the system. It is highly improbable that it represented, even during the depression years, the considered judgment of the church. In disclaiming it the council declared that "every economic order must be evaluated and its practices judged in the light of the Christian Gospel."

The 1952 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America dealt with a variety of social issues. It called attention to the fact that

"millions of workers are still living below levels of economic and social decency." It urged that "laymen participate more actively in management organizations and labor unions as an expression of Christian vocation." The assembly declared that "loyalty oaths in many cases have become forms of thought control" and that due process has been "flouted." Opposition to the United Nations was denounced, and ratification of a Human Rights Covenant and a Genocide Convention was called for. The assembly declared itself for "a non-segregated church in a non-segregated society." A rather unusual and striking feature of the assembly's action was the summons to Christian laymen to "become active in the political life of their communities from the precinct level upwards" and to "take part in drafting constructive party platforms."

THE AMERICAN Baptist Convention at its session last year repeated its call for "complete non-segregation among the churches and institutions within our fellowship," appealed for "preservation and multiplication of the family-owned, family-managed, family-lived-on, and family-worked farm," and insisted that cases of suspected disloyalty "should be handled according to the principles of due process of law with the right of counsel and hearing before an unprejudiced body of their peers." In the international field the convention vigorously supported the United Nations but urged that it seek out "a more constructive road to world peace than that of attempting to control aggression by increasing military power."

The 1952 General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church condemned racial discrimination and called for a liberalization of the existing national immigration policy. Declaring that it saw "in the developing and strengthening of the United Nations the best political hope of mankind," the convention urged that "the Charter be revised and strengthened in accordance with Article 109:3, looking towards its future development into a world organization open to all peoples with defined and limited power, adequate to preserve peace and to prevent aggression through the encouragement and enforcement of World Law."

The Pastoral Letter promulgated at the same time noted that the "incredible increase in power" made available to man in our time "has outrun the familiar Christian answers." Though we still

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talk of "the *dignity of work* or of man's vocation," the fact is that "for the great majority of men in industrial plants those words seem to have little meaning." Moreover, there is deep uncertainty in people's minds "whether the ancient absolutes have any meaning in a world which knows so much about how to manage and contrive."

The social pronouncements of the United Lutheran Church in America are of particular interest because of the traditional aloofness of the Lutheran churches from *corporate* political action. In a sentence which may perhaps be said to express the genius of Protestantism, an official statement declares: "The church may help its members to evaluate practical proposals, but it must reserve to its members the final decision whether such proposals tend to accomplish Christian ends." Within this framework the United Lutheran church has elaborated a set of guiding principles ranging widely over the areas which are claiming the attention of the other denominations. Another official statement defining the social responsibility of the church affirms that it should "talk more about Duties and less about Rights. One of the spiritual weaknesses of our time, from which many of our social problems progressively multiply, comes from the debilitating notion in the minds of people, which has gained almost sanctity, that they can rest back upon things called 'Rights.' If men understand and do their Duty, Rights will follow, and problems will be solved."

TO THESE sample citations from the pronouncements of half a dozen Protestant bodies, one may safely add a few generalizations. Broadly speaking, the Protestant churches are strongly committed to the separation of church and state, which, they insist, precludes at least in spirit diplomatic relations with the Vatican. There is almost universal opposition among Protestants to any weakening of the present judicial prohibition of public support for non-public schools. While the erstwhile pacifism of a substantial part of official Protestantism is no longer in evidence, its influence is reflected in opposition to peace-time military training, and in a deeply troubled conscience over the nation's continued involvement in war. The hot spot now is, of course, the ominous threat to personal liberty involved in some intemperate efforts to eradicate loyalty and security risks. Here the central genius of Protestantism is confronted—devotion to personal freedom under God. Protestant individualism has doubtless been carried to extremes, for freedom can be preserved only if order is maintained. On the other hand, some current attempts in high legislative circles to prescribe patterns for thought, speech, and behavior seem to those of us who have been reared in the Protestant tradition to be all of a piece with collectivist regimentation. As the National Council of Churches has recently declared, "Error must be met by truth in free and open encounter. The conscientious expression of ideas must not be dealt with by a dungeon, a boycott, or an Index, nor by arbitrary governmental action, character assassination, or the application of unjust economic and social pressures."

What of the trend? In recent years Protestant thought in America has experienced a change of climate. The rather easy and enthusiastic optimism about man and the world which prevailed during the early decades of the century has been tempered by an ethical "realism" which has a more orthodox theological base. One result has been a lessening of the confident "activism" that had been characteristic of liberal Protestant Christianity. The chastening was needed; the disillusionment administered by the events of history has been salutary. Signs are not wanting, however, that the nerve of the social-gospel movement is still alive and that its influence will be increasingly felt.

HOLLYWOOD DJINN

With a Dash of Bitters . . . *by Nelson Algren*

"LIFE," Peer Gynt decided, "is a matter of passing safe and dryshod down the rushing stream of time." When, not long past, I discovered myself to be not only passing safe and snugly shod but downright lavishly set up, I felt, though there was no Anitra near, that I agreed with Gynt all the same.

The downright lavish setup was called exotically enough, the Garden of Allah. But the only exotic thing about it was that the rent was free. Free because I was being accorded the ten-day-Hollywood-hospitality treatment, which is prescribed on the assumption that half a grand allotted from a producer's budget toward the comfort and entertainment of any writer from the hinterland is certain—with the help of that Yogi sun—to arouse such slavering gratitude in the hinterlander that he'll sign for whatever sum the producer deigns to name. That if the latter doesn't deign to name a sum, said hinterlander will come to feel so guilty about the advantage he is taking that ultimately he'll sign anything, just to be able to look other men in the eye once more, and the producer can fill in the figures.

"Don't worry about price," I had been comforted over long distance; "you can trust me. I *like* taking care of writers. I'd especially like to take care of you."

I was touched. Even from a distance the man liked me. I could not know that he was applying the first stage of the treatment, wherein the party of the first part can afford nothing less than

NELSON ALGREN, author of "The Man with the Golden Arm" and "Chicago: City on the Make," herein shares his introduction to the mores of Hollywood with readers of The Nation.

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affection for the party of the second. Even from a distance. For I had not yet felt that sun.

DRIVING FROM the station, the producer's flunky assured me that the apartment I was to occupy had been vacated by a name star only a few hours ago. "You'll be sleeping in *his* bed tonight," he promised. How lucky, I thought dreamily, that the train had been late. Living in such a place, I gathered, rent or no rent, was in itself an event, one to make a trip from Chicago well worth any hinterlander's while.

But I didn't myself consider the place any particular great shakes until the flunky appointed the star's pantry with a case of good scotch, a case of fair rye, and a case of cheap bourbon, then lowered his lids to indicate we weren't even to talk about money. "Don't mention it," he reassured me the moment I stopped shaking.

I chose to mention it all the same. What I mentioned specifically was, "For God's sake where's the gin?" He must have thought I said "djinn," for in a moment there appeared—precisely as in a story by John Collier—a real Hollywood djinn, an honest-to-God Guru looking as if he'd slept in a bottle with the cork in it. He was fresh up from Malibu, and his toes stuck out of his sandals like amputated thumbs. With the rest of him stuffed hurriedly into something that looked like a cast-off tattersall of the late Laird Cregar's.

It was of course, the producer himself. And we were off to Romanoff's.

I dined with him unaccompanied that first evening, a bit self-conscious of my closed-in toes. The next, I took the liberty of inviting a new-found friend. The next I took two liberties, and by the time we made the Brown Derby we were blocking traffic. With my senses by now a-whirl with the wonder and hurry of it all, I had no time for the appropriate gratitude.

In the faint hope of fanning a spark in that direction, the djinn inquired softly, during the course of some feverish carryings-on at the Beverly-Wilshire, and the wind whisking every which way, whether I'd care to meet Miss Sylvia Sidney.

The entire course of my life having been determined by the 1931 version of "An American Tragedy," it seemed of no importance at the moment that my eyes weren't focusing. Indeed, I bowed so low from the waist, in the direction I judged the lady to be, that I had a bit of trouble straightening up. It wasn't till the following forenoon that I learned that Miss Sidney was in Brussels.

When I confronted Guru with his betrayal he didn't so much as redden. He was just hurt. The party to whom he'd introduced me, it turned out, was a highly effective writers' agent—so why did I always have to get so salty when somebody tried to do something for me? "We'll get along better when you begin trusting others," he counseled me like a father—and topped the bit off with the hollowest laugh I'd yet heard in the Land of Hollow Laughter.

Then he put a contract before me and confessed, "I'm not a business man at heart"— placing one hand over the heart to indicate precisely where he wasn't a business man—"I'm just another frustrated writer."

I looked around for the other frustrated writer. Seeing none, I placed Bernard Shaw's hand over my own valentine-shaped ticker and confessed in turn, "I'm not a writer at heart. I'm just another frustrated business man. And don't even trust myself."

AGAIN in a matter of moments, but now more as in something by Howard Fast, I was evicted from the Garden of Allah where no Anitra was near. And presented with a bill, *per diem,* which Guru just happened to have in his hand. Itemizing, among other small comforts, one case of good scotch, one case of fair rye, and one case of cheap bourbon. Nothing was free after all.

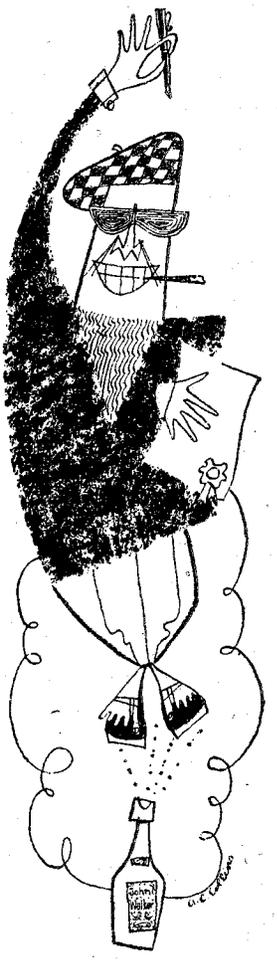
"Is there any relationship between my refusal to sign and my eviction?" I had just time to inquire.

He never so much as cracked. "What kind of a business man do you think I am?" he demanded.

"What kind of a writer do you think *I* am?" was all I could think to reply.

Whereupon we locked, the terrible djinn in the open-toed shoes and I in my watertight ones, in a life-and-death struggle to determine, once and for all, who was the greater jerk.

I very nearly won. But I was scarcely a ranking contender and I was up against the champ. Smart money would have



said he wouldn't even have to extend himself. Yet on the morning he phoned to say, "After all, I *do* like you," I really felt I had him.

"I like you too," I assured him.*

We had now reached that stage wherein the party of the second part can afford nothing less than affection for the party of the first. I needed to buy a house in Indiana as much as he needed to make a million dollars.

So though the very sight of me caused his features to be suffused by a disgust matched by nothing earthly save the revulsion in my own breast, we clung passionately each to each in a friendship based on the solid rock of utter loathing.

He showed up with a flute of Johnny

*To illustrate further the operation of affection in The Land of Hollow Laughter: While I was waiting in the office of a medium-sized bigshot to be introduced to a king-size bigshot, the latter entered and went directly into conference with the medium-sized one without indicating awareness of a third party in the room except by a palm over his mouth and an occasional jerk of a thumb in the general direction of that party. Whispers, chuckles, thumb jerks, a final back slap —and he had left quite as unceremoniously as he had entered. Whereupon the medium-sized one assured me: "He *likes* you." And meant it.

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Walker on one arm and a male friend on the other. By the stardust in the friend's eyes I immediately recognized an autograph hunter, one who inquired my name so shyly that I laughed lightly, "You got me." Whereupon he put a packet of blue papers bound with a red rubber band into my hand, and the only process-server in the world with stardust eyes excused himself.

Riffling hurriedly through the packet, I realized that Guru was charging me with everything from piracy on the high seas to defrauding an innkeeper. I was secretly relieved to note that he didn't have anything on me for the theft of the Stone of Scone. "You see," he explained with that smile which succeeded so wondrously in being at once abjectly shamefaced and haughtily self-satisfied, "every time I talked long distance to you I had a lawyer on the extension."

O Great Guru from Malibu, I knew then how much you liked me.

And as if struck abruptly by the injustice of everything, he strode to the middle of the room, literally beating his breast with one hand and still clutching the bottle fervidly with the other, to turn the awful accusation upon me—"I'm a nice guy! *Why do you make me act like a jerk?*"

Overwhelmed by what I had done to this kindly soul, I followed him about the room as hysterical as he was: "I don't know *why* I make you act like this," I broke down completely; "this isn't the real me! Back home people *like* me!"

Whereupon the party of the first part gently placed the bottle in the left hand of the party of the second and, even more gently, a pen that writes under water in his right.

That Yogi sun had done me in at last.

COMPANY TOWN

The Story *Life* Didn't Tell . . *by Jerry Dale*

[*Recently* Life *printed an article and pictures emphasizing the violence and disorder that marked a paper strike in a small Louisiana town. Here is the other side of the story, written by a former Associated Press reporter who is now assistant editor of the publications department of the International Brotherhood of Paper Makers.*]

Elizabeth, La.

COWS graze in the yard of the community hall in Elizabeth, Louisiana, a sleepy little company town of about a thousand people. You couldn't ask for a quieter place to negotiate a union contract. But while the negotiators in the hall have hardly raised their voices the town outside has been rocked by dynamite explosions and shotgun blasts.

Back in the thirties an organizer for the A. F. of L. Paper Makers made an attempt to unionize the Calcasieu Paper Company's mill in Elizabeth, but company resistance was unusually strong and the organizer soon went on to greener pastures, unionizing other Southern paper mills. The Calcasieu mill remained "open shop," still dictating to its workers, still ignoring their grievances, still owning their homes, their streets, their churches, their very lives.

About four years ago union organizers from both the A. F. of L. and the C. I. O. went to Elizabeth in response to a call from the paper-mill workers. An election was held, and the C. I. O. United Paperworkers of America won by a slim margin over the A. F. of L. International Brotherhood of Paper Makers. The company, however, still refused to sign a contract. Finally the United Paperworkers gave up.

The A. F. of L. union then returned to Elizabeth, reinforced by a sister union, the International Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulphite, and Paper Mill Workers. Another election, held in May, 1951, was lost by two votes. A charge of coercion was then filed against the company with the National Labor Relations Board. The board found management guilty of interference, restraint, and coercion, and ordered a new election, which was held in May, 1952, and which the two unions won, 459 to 204. But even this clear mandate was not enough for management. In an attempt to repeat the tactics used successfully against the C. I. O. the company simply refused to bargain. As a result new charges were filed by the unions with the N. L. R. B. The workers finally took a strike vote, but before they could act, the company closed the mill. The lockout was ordered September 13, 1952.

Two months later C. G. McGehee, president and chairman of the board of the Calcasieu Paper Company, initiated a "back-to-work" movement and after getting a court order restricting picketing reopened the plant. When five hundred of the Calcasieu workers refused to return to work, many more than had originally voted for the unions, the company recruited strike-breakers, some locally, some in other areas. State troopers escorted the scabs to and from work.

Soon afterward management notified the men still on strike that they had been "permanently discharged." At the same time it ordered striking workers out of their company-owned homes. These evictions are still being fought in the courts by the unions' attorneys.

VIOLENCE now burst out. Homes and cars belonging to both strikers and scabs were shot into and set on fire. A gas line supplying fuel to the plant was blown up several times, and a spur of the Santa Fe Railroad leading into the mill was dynamited.

The union leaders immediately disassociated the membership from these acts, but the company charged that the culprits were "union men" and issued arms to the scabs. This move led to the belief that at least some of the incidents

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were the work of *agents provocateurs,* designed to give the unions a bad name and the company an excuse to arm its scabs.

Shortly after the plant was shut down, the Federal Conciliation Service entered the dispute. It failed to persuade management to bargain with the union and promptly withdrew. Later state officials managed to schedule some talks. The company attorney, apparently fearing new charges of unfair labor practices, went through the motions of "bargaining" but stubbornly refused to rehire the strikers. It became increasingly clear to the union negotiators that McGehee had no intention of dealing with the unions and was scheduling "negotiating sessions" only to satisfy federal requirements.

Last March, Governor Robert Kennon of Louisiana sent a wire to McGehee urging him to submit the Calcasieu dispute to the state mediation board, a step to which the unions had already agreed. McGehee rejected the proposal. At the next negotiating session in the Elizabeth community hall the company agreed to a few of the unions' demands, including a nine-cents-an-hour wage raise, merit increases, and a maintenance-of-membership clause, but refused to rehire more than a handful of the strikers. The company attorney declared it would never grant one of the workers' major demands—a grievance and arbitration process for all company disciplinary measures. In other words, the company "agreed" to run a scab plant, to pay the scabs nine cents more, and to ask the scabs if they wanted to join the union. After the unions had rejected this "offer," the lawyer declared that further talks were useless.

Two months and several outbursts of violence later, Governor Kennon summoned high union and company officials to a "peace conference." At the first session, held in Baton Rouge in May, McGehee on the one hand and the international presidents of the Paper Makers and the Pulp Workers on the other agreed only that they disagreed. Another session was held a month later, and again little or no progress was made. The strike is now ten months old and is as far from being settled as ever.

Armed scabs still rule Elizabeth at night, and state police guard road blocks. The mill is like a penitentiary, with its giant searchlights trained on the pickets, its arsenal of weapons, and its high barbed-wire fence patrolled by armed guards. One night the lights were turned out to permit the scabs to raid and fire the picket shanties.

A few years ago the strikers did not know what unions were. They are learning the hard way, and so are the scabs. Absentee-owner McGehee, in his comfortable home in Jacksonville, Florida, is learning a lesson, too. As one union official put it, McGehee might own the jobs and homes of the people of Elizabeth but not their minds.

THE LABOR PRESS

Fifteen Million Readers Plus . . *by Ben Pearse*

THE LABOR PRESS has been described as a large amorphous mass of processed newsprint, usually filled with sound and fury and often signifying nothing. Many of its leaders, polled privately, are as likely as not to purse their lips and wrinkle their noses in obvious distaste at their own product. But then they hasten to explain that the malodorousness of the mass is not always characteristic of its component parts, that labor papers are gradually improving, and that many compare favorably with their competitors. Finally, labor editors are practically unanimous in the opinion that the labor press, despite its many faults, is doing an increasingly effective job of counterbalancing the "one-party" press of the non-labor world. There is evidence to support their views on all counts.

Statistically, the labor press is impressive. The latest report of the Department of Labor lists 174 national and international unions, with a membership probably exceeding fifteen million, which issue official publications. The report lists an additional 90 state and territorial organizations of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations with papers of their own. Besides these, an undetermined number of periodicals are published by regional, county, and local labor organizations—probably two or three times as many as are listed by the Department of Labor. Unofficial estimates put the number of labor publications at 800 or more with a combined circulation of twenty to thirty million, although much of this undoubtedly represents duplication. Most papers are published monthly or oftener; a large proportion are weeklies.

These figures are somewhat surprising. But if fifteen million union members get an average of two periodicals once a month or oftener, as they probably do, the thirty-million circulation estimate is well within reason. Assuming four in a family, the number of readers should jump to sixty million, according to the usual calculations—a lush field for consumer advertising of all kinds, it would seem. Yet it is not so considered, at least by national advertisers who are not subject to local pressures. Why? The reason lies behind that word "readers." How many of all these union publications are actually *read?*

Nobody knows. Estimates are little more than opinion, sometimes one man's

BEN PEARSE, former Washington newspaperman, is now a free-lance writer.

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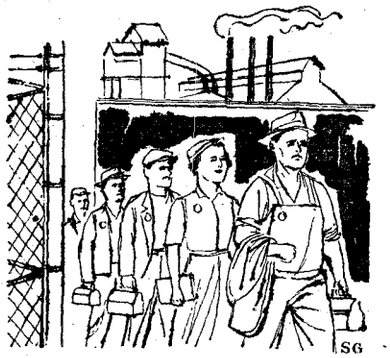

only, like this one. But as good a place as any to get an opinion might be the conclusions reached by the San Francisco Labor Council, A. F. of L., in April, 1951, when it was trying to revive its suspended *Labor Clarion,* defunct for three years for, among other things, lack of money. In an editorial asking, What's Wrong with the Labor Press? the council said:

> . . . it doesn't take a college professor to know what is wrong. . . . Any union official who's been receiving half a dozen or so papers every week for years, any rank and file member who's on the mailing list . . . could give a very good summation . . . [why] nobody reads it.
>
> Why? Because it's unreadable . . . dull . . . a hodgepodge of clippings . . . a collection of minutes of meetings, printed in midget-sized six-point type . . . full of long essays by somebody or other on how glad he is to have this opportunity to extend his greetings . . . which he does for eight pages. Too many dull speeches . . . smudgy mat-service photos of an individual laying a cornerstone in Peewee, Ohio. Not enough news, local news, lively news of what's going on, on the local labor scene. Old-fashioned typography, bad design, 1890 format. That what's wrong with the labor press. And that's not all. . . .

The San Francisco Labor Council today has an excellent weekly paper, *San Francisco Labor,* the product of careful study and planning to make it a real newspaper and not just a throwaway. Union publishers and editors throughout the country could profit from its example.

A survey of union members at a large pharmaceutical plant in New Jersey by the Department of Economics and Social Institutions of Princeton showed: (1) that the printed matter distributed by the company was much more widely read than that of the union, quite possibly because the company spent more money and went in heavily for chit-chat and personal items, and (2) that more than half the members interviewed did not know whether the union was for or against the Taft-Hartley act, although the union had been fighting T-H since the bill was born in the Eightieth Congress.

A few years ago the Industrial Relations Center of the University of Minnesota analyzed the readability of a group of management and union publications based on a formula set forth in Flesh's "The Art of Readable Writing." The formula measures readability by grading subject matter according to the average length of sentences and words, penalizing the use of long, involved sentences and multiple-syllable words and rewarding the use of short words and sentences. The resulting scale ranges from 0, or "very difficult" reading, to 100, or "very easy" reading. On this scale, the union publications scored between 31 and 50, a rating of "difficult," requiring a high-school or some college education to be understood. The same survey showed that the overwhelming proportion of rank-and-file employees needed reading matter of a score of 70 or higher—"fairly easy" reading.

Analyzing the "human interest" level of the publications, the center rated none of the union papers as "dramatic" or "very interesting" (the two highest grades). Only 28 per cent were rated "interesting," while 52 per cent were rated "mildly interesting" and 20 per cent "dull." Without the personal items they contained, most of the publications rated as "interesting" would have got a lower mark.

WHY, THEN, should there be any labor press at all? In the first place, unions must have some means of informing their members of meetings, elections, conventions, dues, and the activities of their own and other unions. Secondly, most union officials and the more active members feel that the daily newspapers, whether from lack of space or inclination, fail to give labor matters sufficiently full and accurate coverage. That feeling is not so widespread as it was before the news services and large dailies came to have a special "labor reporter," but it still exists—and with some justification.

Although labor papers have been published sporadically for more than 125 years, the labor press really began with the formation of the A. F. of L. in the 1880's. For the next fifty years, with some notable exceptions, labor publications were usually heavily loaded with treatises on the humanities and labor ideology. Some printed obituaries; others carried lists of new arrivals in various locals and "stay-away" towns where union membership was taboo—because of the black list and their own wanderlust skilled craftsmen were often a roving lot and had friends in all parts of the country. Such items were the only rank-and-file personals to be found in the stuffy pages of the general run of labor publications until the National Industrial Recovery Act set off a revolution in the 1930's.

WITH THE organizing drives of the first and second Roosevelt administrations, labor papers came into their own as organizing media. The American Newspaper Guild probably deserves considerable credit for the widespread improvement in the format and content of the publications of this era. Newspapermen who had paid little or no attention to labor organizations, suddenly became intensely interested, contributing time and experience to the avalanche of newspapers and pamphlets that deluged the unorganized. With the establishment of the C. I. O. came the national edition, the clip-sheet, the labor column, the "canned" editorial, and many other phenomena of mass-production journalism. While organization of the unorganized and improvements in wages and working conditions were the main themes, labor's interest broadened to include health, social security, welfare, education, and politics in a big way.

The bloom of the organizing campaigns is now gone. No longer do unions mushroom to memberships of hundreds of thousands, even a million or more, in a few years. Labor unions are growing still, but not at the zooming pace of the '30's. The need now is to consolidate the membership and to keep members interested in the problems that still lie ahead. The situation calls for different methods, as the New Jersey survey, admittedly small-scale, seems to indicate. When more than half the members of a local do not know whether their union is for or against the Taft-Hartley act there's something wrong.

Getting members to read union publications and to absorb at least the

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salient features is obviously one of the principal problems facing the labor press today. For the most part, the union paper is not intended to be anything but a house organ, reflecting the policies of the elected officials. Subscriptions usually come automatically with the union card. But of course the union member can't be prevented from throwing his paper into the waste-basket before he reads it.

ONE OF THE notable exceptions is *Labor,* a national weekly serving fifteen railroad unions. Possibly one of the reasons for its success is the fact that readers do not get their copies automatically. Eight of the unions subscribe *en masse* for their members, but subscriptions are renewed at each convention. The others, like the International Association of Machinists and the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, have publications of their own, but the members of locals which are largely employed on railroads often take *Labor* voluntarily as a second paper. Dating back to 1919, the paper now has a circulation of more than 850,000, including more than 30,000 single subscriptions from members of non-railroad unions and individuals interested in labor problems generally. It is commonly considered the New York *Times* of the labor press. It frankly espouses labor's cause, but is factual, well-edited, and largely free from adjectivitis, a common affliction among labor journals.

During the past several years there has been a growing awareness that readability must be a prime consideration in getting out a labor paper. Both the C. I. O. and the A. F. of L. publish well-edited tabloid weeklies, the *CIO News* and the *AFL News-Reporter,* intended primarily to keep union officials informed on policy and the latest developments in the labor field. Together with a number of railroad and independent unions, the two organizations have established Labor Press Associated, which furnishes subscribers with news coverage, mats, pictures, cartoons, dress patterns, "think" columns, jokes, and a wide variety of material designed to give labor papers the professional touch.

The oldest of the labor press services is the Federated Press, formerly the leading "syndicated" service, but now serving principally the unions ousted by the C. I. O. a few years ago on charges of Communist domination. It has been largely supplanted by Labor Press Associated, organized in 1949 for that specific purpose. L. P. A. is governed by a board composed of six representatives of the C. I. O., six of the A. F. of L., and two of "neutral" unions, and headed by Ruben Levin, editor of *Labor.* Besides these, there are the A. F. of L.'s International Labor News Service, the Labor Press Service, owned and managed by the International Typographical Union, and a few others operating on a more limited scale.

The problem of the labor editor is to decide how much of this material to use and how much space to save to capture and hold the interest of his readers. Some of the devices to create reader interest used by the *Machinist,* International Association of Machinists' weekly, for example, are noteworthy. They range from the use of large type for easy reading to cheesecake for easy looking. A "swap shop" column, originally started to cut down the high cost of tools, has become a weekly feature and now lists everything from lawnmowers and boats to seashore lots. There is a "hobby corner," a recipe section conducted entirely by members' wives, and a fishing-story contest with a rod and reel invented by a member as a prize. One member, a radio ham, wrote in to get in touch with other member-hams. A member interested in chess wanted to communicate with those similarly inclined, and the *Machinist* soon had a chess tournament going on by mail.

The Seafarers Log, semi-monthly tabloid of the A. F. of L. Seafarers International Union, Atlantic and Gulf District, carries in each issue an account of job conditions at various ports and a digest of ship's meetings, listing everything good and bad about individual ships. *Steel Labor,* monthly paper of the C. I. O. United Steelworkers of America, goes in strongly for color printing and layouts featuring the union's locals. The United Mine Workers' *Journal* stresses safety and the benefits of its welfare and retirement fund. *Union Voice,* a twenty-four-page bi-monthly tabloid published by the C. I. O. Distributive, Processing, and Office Workers Union, specializes in local coverage by volunteer reporters and photographers.

There are still too many pages of solid type and too many pictures of officials shaking hands, but the trend is toward attractive format, better typography, and content tailored to the interests of the individual member. Perhaps the most encouraging sign is the recognition by labor editors themselves that reader interest must be earned. Perhaps another sign is the fact that some national advertising has begun recently to appear in state and local labor papers—international union publications do not as a rule accept advertising. Advertising agencies have discovered that the labor press is beginning to be read.

LABOR'S perennial goal is a national daily labor newspaper. Some picture it as a *Christian Science Monitor* or *Wall Street Journal* for labor. Union leaders have been talking about such a paper for years. Well, Brother, this may be news to you, but there *is* a daily labor paper, at least one published five times a week. It is *Labor's Daily,* owned and issued by the International Typographical Union in Charleston, West Virginia. The paper was originally one of eight I.T.U. dailies established when union members went on strike there and in Meriden, Connecticut; Allentown, Pennsylvania; Beckley and Huntington, West Virginia; Springfield, Missouri: Texarkana, Arkansas; and Monroe, Louisiana. The other seven are still being published under the name of *Daily News-Digest* in opposition to the local struck papers, carrying the same general news as their daily competitors. In Charleston, however, the *Daily News-Digest* was converted for tactical reasons to a labor daily, eliminating local news entirely and concentrating on the national labor scene. Supported at first by local and state unions, it has branched out and now boasts circulation in more than thirty states. Subscriptions are open to the general public. Address: P.O. Box 6177, Station A, Charleston 2, W. Va.

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BOOKS

Tales, Moral and Satanic

SATAN IN THE SUBURBS AND OTHER STORIES. By Bertrand Russell. Simon and Schuster. $3.

By Joseph Wood Krutch

THE more platitudinous old Romans used to remind one another from time to time that Cato learned Greek at eighty. Bertrand Russell has not been conspicuously an advocate of Roman virtue, but he has taken up the writing of fiction a little later than Cato took up Greek. And what will surprise no one is that he can do it, too. If "Satan in the Suburbs" were the work of some young unknown it would not be read by as many people as will read it now. But it would certainly have found a publisher, and the reviewers would have said, "This Mr. Russell has a real gift for words."

As becomes a philosopher, Lord Russell has chosen that most philosophical form of fiction, the *conte.* After more than a normal lifetime spent in generalization and abstraction he would hardly be likely to practice the methods of the stenographic realists. Moreover, and after all, the novel was a middle-class invention; the sort of tale which is just not quite a fable or an allegory is an ancient and aristocratic one. As might be expected, Lord Russell has more in common with Voltaire than with Samuel Richardson.

A brief preface informs us that we readers cannot possibly be more surprised than the author was to find him writing tales, that they are not the result of any long-cherished secret ambition but of a sudden impulse, and that they are intended as pure entertainment. Each of the five which follow is based upon an idea or a fancy rather than upon a character or an observed situation. Each has a certain satiric bite, and, as becomes the work of a skeptic, each is somewhat ambiguous in its point of view. The heroes and villains are intentionally cardboard, and the diableries of the plot are harmlessly theatrical. But between the lines there are numerous whiffs of genuine brimstone.

In the title story a wicked doctor gives Machiavellian advice to a succession of dull, weak people who cannot possibly follow it successfully; in "The Infra-redioscope" a sinister coalition formed by a journalist, a financier, an advertising man, and an inventor plan a gigantic hoax on the whole world and are hoist by their own petard; in "The Guardians of Parnassus" the master of a college at Oxbridge is ostracized for life because an enemy succeeds in making it believed that the master committed the unforgivable sin of voting for his own election to office. And always the best phrases of the teller of the tale are so unobtrusively slipped in that a professional comedian would call it "throwing them away." Thus a banker about to be ruined thinks of the hard fate of his two sons "now both at a good public school, looking forward to an honorable career, in which athletic honors should pave the way for responsible posts." A very upright observer is so touched by the fate of the supposedly guilty master that "he came almost to doubt whether punishment of sin is the main duty of the virtuous man." And the Napoleon of advertising feels that his publisher friend's first rule, "Give the people what they want," is contemptible, weak when compared with his own: "Make the public want what you give it."

In the preface Lord Russell says that the first of the stories to be written "attempted to combine the moods of 'Zuleika Dobson' and 'The Mysteries of Udolpho.'" Reviewers must have felt that this suggested a manner rather difficult for the prospective reader to imagine and, according to the jacket, have dragged in Dumas, Rider Haggard, Stevenson, and Conan Doyle—of whom the last is not as wildly irrelevant as the rest if one thinks only of some of the initial situations and forgets the contrast between Lord Russell's satanic overtones and Conan Doyle's monumental innocence. At certain moments there are also faint Gilbertian touches, as for instance in the case of the widely experienced lady who falls passionately in love with a clergyman right out of the "Bab Ballads" because such utter irreproachability is the one characteristic she has never before met in a man. But what all these comparisons really mean is not that the author has been playing the sedulous ape to half the writers in the English language but merely that all moral tales which take the form of the fanciful have certain characteristics in common. Lord Russell is not more unlike Conan Doyle than Voltaire was unlike Samuel Johnson, but it was often enough remarked in their time that "Rasselas" would surely have been called an imitation of "Candide" had the two not been published almost simultaneously.

MORAL TALES these remain despite the disclaimer of the preface: "I should be very sorry if it were supposed that the stories are meant to point a moral or illustrate a doctrine. Each of them was written for its own sake, simply as a story, and if it is found either interesting or amusing it has served its purpose." But moral they nevertheless remain, and they are not made any less so even when the moral is, as on at least one occasion it seems to be, a Manichean insistence that knowledge of evil must precede any real virtue, or even when the moral might possibly be reduced to something like: "Crime doesn't pay—unless you are cleverer at it than most men are."

Having been frequently compared to the Mad Hatter, Lord Russell need not be surprised if a reviewer thus imitates the Ugly Duchess in insisting that a moral must always be deducible even if not consciously intended. And the story which most irresistibly invites interpretation is "The Infra-redioscope," in which the unholy coalition mentioned previously sells the inhabitants of the whole world a fake gadget by the use of which nearly everybody can be persuaded that he can see otherwise invisible invaders from Mars. The author is too complicated a skeptic to make this story the simple satire on red hunts which it may at first appear. For one thing the few sensible people who see through the

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JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH, formerly The Nation's *drama critic, is the author of "Samuel Johnson," "The Twelve Seasons," and other books.*

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hoax hesitate to expose it because the Communist and non-Communist worlds unite again to fight a common enemy. Worse yet, the hoaxers and the hoaxed alike are destroyed in the end by the arrival of real Martians, visible without the infra-redioscope and unanticipated by either those who believed or those who did not believe in the imaginary bogies. And the moral of that, so the Ugly Duchess might insist, probably is that neither fanatical witch-hunters nor fanatical anti-witch-hunters are wise enough to know what the real danger is.

When Lord Russell first came into his title he used to speak of it with derision. The present reviewer has scrupulously used it now on the assumption that since titles have become unpopular its holder probably values it highly. In conclusion, here is one more example of how he underplays his gibes: the speaker is approached in a Continental hotel by a brisk stranger whose firm jaw seems to proclaim him an American business man. "But to my surprise, when he addressed me it was in English."

Oriental Philosophy

HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY, EASTERN AND WESTERN. Sponsored by the Ministry of Education, Government of India. 2 vols. Macmillan. $15.

By W. Norman Brown

ORIENTALISTS and citizens of Oriental countries have for many decades pointed out that most European and American historians of philosophy write with little or no knowledge of the Oriental aspects of that subject, give them no attention, and leave an impression that only the West has produced philosophy. Some authors, especially in Germany, have asserted in defense that so-called Oriental philosophy is not philosophy at all, since it has a teleological religious motivation.

It is a natural reaction that in free India, where cultural nationalism today is affirming indigenous intellectual traditions, the Ministry of Education should sponsor a history of world philosophy, from its beginnings to its current phases, which presents an Oriental view of the balance between Eastern and Western philosophical achievements. The editorial board was headed by Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, who is celebrated in both hemispheres for his accomplishments, and the introductory essay is written by the Honorable Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Minister of Education, less well known in the West but honored in India for his learning and constructive thinking. The work is of the symposium type, consisting of contributions by some sixty scholars, all Indian except for two Chinese, one Japanese, and two British.

To a Westerner its first point of interest is likely to be the fact that Eastern philosophy gets nearly 600 pages, of which 540 are on Indian philosophy, while Western philosophy gets a little more than 400. The strength of the work is its treatment of classical Indian thought in its many phases, which is based upon the various authors' wide and intensive acquaintance with primary texts and medieval commentaries on them. Of the authors, some give attention to modern critical scholarship in the field, including writings by Western scholars, but others hardly allude to it. Though there is a chapter on contemporary Indian thought, it does not reveal that there is any significant modern development from the great creative past. Westerners may be interested to read what Easterners have to say about Western philosophy, including modern thinking in Europe and America, partly to get the advantage of criticism and partly to see the type of cross-fertilization in India between East and West, which may some day lead to new types of speculative thought there.

W. NORMAN BROWN, professor of Sanskrit at the University of Pennsylvania, has written many books on India.

New Books in Brief

Extraordinary Man

WINSTON CHURCHILL: THE ERA AND THE MAN. By Virginia Cowles. Harper. $5.

"There's nothing much in *that* field left unplowed," Churchill said to the author when she told him she was going to write his biography. And indeed the plot has been assiduously cultivated, notably by Churchill himself, most of whose thirty volumes are either consciously or unconsciously autobiographical. Nevertheless, Miss Cowles, an American newspaperwoman long resident in England, has raised a worthwhile crop. In particular, she has thrown fresh light on Churchill's formative years and has traced very effectively the way in which he was influenced by the tragically meteoric career of his brilliant father.

There can be no doubt that this book is the best popular biography of the British Prime Minister, contrasting pleasantly with various rankly eulogistic pot-boilers that have appeared in recent years. Not that Miss Cowles is in the least hostile to Churchill. In fact, she compares his protean energies to those of Leonardo da Vinci and writes that "no one can meet this extraordinary man without a feeling of awe." But admiration is here tempered by cool analysis. Miss Cowles recognizes Churchill's boundless courage, physical and moral, but dwells also on his overflowing ambition, his tremendous egotism, and his opportunism. Sharing the view of the vast majority of her adopted countrymen that he is an incomparable leader in war, she also appears to agree with the many among them who consider him dangerously unskilled in the arts of peace.

Jewish Family Saga

THE SIEGE. By Illes Kaczer. Translated from the Hungarian by Lawrence Wolfe. Dial Press. $5.

A Hungarian here gives us a fragment of the perpetual quest of nineteenth-century Middle European Jewry for a place to strike roots. His chronicle of Sholem ben Yoirish's flight from Ruthenia westward with his wife, Malkah (or Regina), and their two small children takes us back to the Napoleonic era, when the hemmed-in Jews were first given a chance to emerge from the ghetto, to have surnames, and, in rare instances, to pursue the advanced studies available to Gentile university students.

"The Siege" is a family saga in which

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the tribulations, hopes, and achievements of Sholem and his family carry, too impersonally for complete conviction, the burden of representative Jewish tribulations and hopes. The great communicative spirit of a folk writer like Pinsky is almost totally lacking.

The two novels here presented in one volume are both over-long and are studded with every conceivable folkway, from the standard snobbism of Sephardic Jews toward the Ashkenazim, and especially, of course, the Galicians, to the feverish stress on book learning as a means to material salvation. Out of it all comes a two-dimensional panorama, a sort of tapestry of stock figures against the fascinating European scene of the early eighteen hundreds.

Plans That Failed

ECONOMIC PLANNING FOR THE PEACE. By E. F. Penrose. Princeton. $7.50.

The war-time planning by the Allies for reconstruction was an impressive failure. E. F. Penrose, who was economic adviser to John Winant, our ambassador to England, has written a partial history of the failure—Bretton Woods, Hot Springs, Havana, UNRRA, Morgenthau plan—as viewed from the peripheral post of liaison officer among the Allies. The European economic structure at the end of the war was mutilated by battle and distorted by interwar cycles, militarism, autarchic efforts, and a secular shift of economic power to other continents. The political structure was compromised by exile or collaboration or generally inept leadership. The social structure was as distorted as the economy and as leaderless as the governments.

For this bankrupt society the war-time planners deliberated over establishing mechanisms of trade and finance, over providing relief to prevent total collapse, and over imposing a harsh peace to speed the collapse. The result of the "plans" was a Europe which two years after the capitulation was divided into "colonies" of the United States and Russia. The political instability of colonial economies which offered no resistance to Soviet expansionism forced the United States after 1947 to participate in a planned economic reconstruction of Western Europe. Mr. Penrose tells faithfully the history of the negotiated plans and their failures, but his study needs an analysis of the larger matrix of European society of whose ills the plans were mere symptoms.

World of Alfred Noyes

TWO WORLDS FOR MEMORY. An Autobiography. By Alfred Noyes. Lippincott. $5.

It is a fact—whatever it may mean—that since Masefield and Noyes no poets writing in the English language have had an audience comparable in size to that of the great Victorians. Early in the present volume Mr. Noyes reminds the reader that his early work was enthusiastically praised by Meredith, Yeats, Swinburne, and Andrew Lang, but if that suggests a defensive attitude nothing else in the book does. At seventy he remembers his successes with pleasure and appears to be either unaware of or indifferent to the fact that his fame went the way of most Georgian fame. He categorically denies the story—told as fact in at least one widely used reference work—that the Roman Catholic church, which he had joined as a convert, demanded revisions in his "Voltaire" or that he made any. Despite a few pointed anecdotes and an account of a polite controversy with Hardy, this is a rather tepid book, recording the life of a man who seems to have seen little except the pleasantly conventional side of the literary world.

A Fascinating Business

PIRACY WAS A BUSINESS. By Cyrus H. Karraker. Richard R. Smith. $3.

JOLLY ROGER: The Story of the Great Age of Piracy. By Patrick Pringle. Norton. $3.95.

The determined deglamourization of piracy in these two books fails to rob the profession of its fascination. For even if we are compelled to discard much popular legendry, we receive by way of compensation stories such as those of the New England pirates who were strict Sabbatarians. A special point of interest, well developed by both Dr. Karraker and Mr. Pringle, is that pirates, like modern racketeers, flourished chiefly when in cahoots with government officials and respectable merchants. The assistance of the latter was particularly important, for piratical loot seldom took the form of pieces-of-eight and bullion; the bulk of it was cloth, spices, and other products which had to be disposed of through commercial channels. That forced pirates to become business men and encouraged business men to dabble in piracy at least to the extent of serving as fences. In Dr. Karraker's pages we find many details of the association, often with the connivance of the authorities, between sundry pirates and celebrated New York merchants such as Frederick Philipse.

Refugee Scholars

THE CULTURAL MIGRATION. THE EUROPEAN SCHOLAR IN AMERICA. Edited by W. Rex Crawford. University of Pennsylvania Press. $3.

It was a happy idea of the University of Pennsylvania to invite five refugee scholars—Franz L. Neumann, Henri Peyre, Erwin Panofsky, Wolfgang Köhler, and Paul Tillich—to discuss their experiences in their adopted country. They did so with a remarkable sense of proportion and fairness, and fortunately not without constructive criticism. Thus the book will be read with equal profit by Europeans and by Americans.

The immigration of intellectuals to the United States since Lenin's revolution—only Mr. Peyre deals with this phenomenon in all its breadth—has no parallel in history. That the transition to a new life of so many individuals—as human beings, as intellectuals, and as scholars in their fields—was so successful was primarily due to the character of the American people and universities. Naturally, the foreign scholars had to adapt themselves to an entirely different outlook in many fields of scholarship: for that very reason they have become important intermediaries between the Old World and the New World within the common Western civilization. Their intermediate position is well expressed by Franz Neumann, who has gone back many times to Germany since 1945 and who writes: "Invariably the returning scholar finds himself in a strange position: while here at home he frequently has to fight the over-enthusiasm for empirical research and to stress the need for theory and history, in Germany he becomes, by compulsion, an advocate of empirical research."

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Films

Manny Farber

"STALAG 17" is a crude, cliché-ridden glimpse of a Nazi prison camp that I hated to see end. Rather than a story, this version of the Broadway hit comedy is a loosely linked succession of spots featuring amusing ideas picked up from a hundred different sources. The film gets under way through the clumsy device of a recollection by an American airman who, stuttering for movie realism, has a story to tell about his years as a war prisoner in a squalid camp. According to the narrator, there was a mysterious stoolie sneaking information about secret tunnels, hidden radios, and Allied troop placements to the Nazi commandant.

The story has to do with the unmasking of this informer. Thanks to one sharp, informative portrait—a Sammy Glick type of enterprising heel played by Bill Holden—the yarn has some suspense. And the various bits of Broadwayish entertainment—the character who skulks around like an exile from Hoff's union-suit cartoons, a human bulletin board with a high electric-saw voice ("all men from Texas will meet behind the north latrine"), a wonderful gag about the you-wont-believe-this letter-writer—are exploded with skill and humor. The camera work is bold. The direction gets an enormous amount of detail and vitality into the crowded hut, which may remind you of a static New York subway car. Though it tells you little about prison camps, Nazis, or American fliers, the film gives you your money's worth of entertainment.

Billy ("Sunset Boulevard") Wilder directed, and as usual he plays high, wide, but not very handsomely with the realism of the picture. Sometimes, as in the exchanges between the camp's "operator" (Holden) and a millionaire flying hero from Southampton (Don Taylor), Wilder can make the talk caustic and real. Most of the time he is simply clowning around with the truth. The gross ape from Brooklyn who creates most of the laughs because he is supposed to be an ugly near-illiterate happens to move in the graceful patter steps that have been around vaudeville for years. In fact, most of the disheveled, quarreling prisoners act like night-club entertainers. One of them does a Jimmy Cagney impersonation; another looks very smooth strumming a primitive one-string instrument; even the barracks' "crazy Joey" acts demented in perfect rhythm.

According to "Stalag," the prison camps were run by petty, ambitious fools and inhabited by American prisoners who were almost all glib, tough city boys. This is a typical Wilder view of the human race. While he has a reputation for making "downbeat" movies, he impresses more with his knack for getting a quality of "plenty" into everything. Taking a crass character like the one Holden plays, Wilder builds him up in all directions. The fellow has a little clock in his head which tells him just how tough he can act without getting into a fight. He refuses to be insulted and can be pushed around indefinitely. When Wilder shows you something about this opportunist, you always recognize it as something you've seen or heard. It doesn't seem important that in this picture Holden has a long skeletal head and does a lot of oily talking with his hands. But Wilder presses these details into your consciousness. By rounding out a character here and a gag there he ends by giving you the feeling of having participated in an unusual amount of disreputable, noisy movie life.

Except for a few grainy, wintery shots of the prison compound, the photography is all close focus. Usually you are looking over someone's shoulder into a tight little clump of prisoners, the camera acting like a kibitzer nosing himself through a crowd into the center of every event. In one telling picture the lens is practically up against a soldier's lips as he kisses a pin-up of Betty Grable. Another shot that stuck out reminded me of Mantegna's foreshortened painting of Christ—the beat-up figure of the supposed stoolie, Holden, glimpsed from around his shoes as he convalesces in bed. In other words, Wilder keeps the pressure on with a camera that is hard up against the actors.

THE CURRENT movie scene includes these pictures:

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homesteaders theme, and the silliest of all child characters.

"Julius Caesar": an overrated play about political assassins, helped no end by James Mason's poetically human rendering of Brutus and Greer Garson's effective performance as a conqueror's wife.

"The Desert Rats": an intelligently handled film about the Tobruk siege, injured somewhat by the fact that there is more noise than warfare in the battle scenes.

"Crash of Silence": an unheralded British film that takes a realistic journey into the brain and feelings of a deaf child; a good, shocking film.

"Scared Stiff": a haunted-house comedy which has some fair nimble-grotesque dancing by Jerry Lewis and nothing else.

"Rome 11 O'Clock": a multi-plotted handling of an actual newspaper headline; one want ad that drew an enormous number of applicants, a building crash, and the feeling of being jammed-up in a city are well captured with a documentary technique.

Theater

Harold Clurman

Tel-Aviv

THE question most frequently put to me about my work in Israel, where I am staging "Caesar and Cleopatra" in a Hebrew translation, is how a director can put on a play in a language of which he understands no more than a few words. It is not enough to reply that many members of the acting company understand English and that an interpreter translates the director's instructions for the benefit of those who don't. The question is neither an individual nor a mechanical matter, but involves a fundamental problem of theater art. How can the director know what is being said at each particular moment of the play, and how can he deal with the nuances of language and speech?

The question becomes particularly pertinent when we consider that Shaw's play is surely more important for its ideas and words than for its plot. Yet even in this case I find that because he was a playwright and not merely a pamphleteer, the problem of directing Shaw in a foreign language is not so difficult as it might seem.

I am glad to take up this problem because it necessitates a discussion of the nature of stage direction. Structurally a play is not a series of speeches but a series of actions. The first question a dramatist asks himself—and this is even truer of the director—is not what do the characters say as they enter the stage but what do they do, what do they intend to do, what do they succeed or fail to do in the course of the scene.

Take, for instance, the first speech of Act I in "Caesar and Cleopatra"—one of the most literary, as distinguished from dramatic, in the whole play: "Hail, Sphinx: salutation from Julius Caesar! I have wandered in many lands, seeking the lost regions from which my birth in this world has exiled me, etc., etc." It reads like the baldest sort of rhetorical exposition—a kind of exalted fanfare to set the tone and introduce the ethical motif underlying the horseplay which follows. Because the actor who plays Caesar usually thinks of his speech as a wordy introduction to the action proper I have often found the speech not only rather boring but hard to "catch on to"—the dignified words, apparently abstract, lull the spectator into a sort of lofty lethargy.

But if we think of the speech as an action we realize that Caesar, curious, eager, energetic, and always mentally alert, is studying the desert, seeking something in it to which he looks forward with the intense pleasure of a man who knows he confronts a great force with which he feels entirely capable of dealing. The riddle of life which the Sphinx represents is no profounder than Caesar's capacity to grasp it, for Caesar identifies himself with the Sphinx, sees it as something akin to himself.

Thus Caesar's speech is a self-explanation effected through an excited probing of the symbol of his own genius which he finds in the Sphinx. When Caesar asks, "Have I read your riddle, Sphinx?" he is glowing with an exultant pride and a (characteristically Shavian) sense of self-satisfaction. We almost anticipate, with Caesar, that the Sphinx will answer with a hearty "Ay!" and wink its approbation. Understood in this light, the scene is not only not oratorically static; it is all drama, that is, action.

Once the director discovers what happens in a scene, not in obvious physical terms alone but in terms of the basic human action, the spoken words become instruments of that action and can be heard as such. (Deaf people, it is said, are often much more acute judges of acting than people who hear the words of a play for their surface meaning only, because the deaf try to see what is actually going on. When actors do no more than repeat words—that is, recite their lines—nothing is going on, and the stage under these circumstances becomes dull and theatrically uncommunicative.) The director chooses actions for the actors to carry out as notes are set down for the musicians to play. If these notes are clear to the director, and the actors play them well, the director can hear as well as see them distinctly, no matter what language is being spoken.

What I am describing is not a figurative truth but a literal one. As rehearsals progress and the play's actions become ever more sharply defined by the actors' performance of them, my ear becomes increasingly attuned to the exactly proper pitch which their execution requires—visually, acoustically, and even phonetically. Thus without knowing Hebrew I not only can follow practically every word but can detect wrong emphases and even peculiarities or blemishes of accent. In other words, through familiarity with the specific theatrical actions of the play I am able to tell what actors have good and what actors have bad enunciation!

The language of the theater, in short, is not so much the language of the specific words being used as a kind of universal language of action; so that the correct use of speech in the theater is not necessarily achieved by the person with the best diction but by the actor with the clearest dramatic intention.

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Music

B. H. Haggin

THE term "sonorous image" that I borrowed from Aaron Copland in a recent article occurs in the book "Music and Imagination" (Harvard, $2.75) containing his Charles Eliot Norton lectures at Harvard in 1951-52. The writing of Copland I had encountered previously had been the annoyingly unrigorous and fallacious ad hoc arguments of the propagandist for contemporary music; and a little of it is in this book too. But for the most part, in these lectures concerned with "the relation of the imaginative mind to the different aspects of the art of music," Copland is the critic—a critic operating with the special insight of a composer, and able to give us the benefit of this insight because he is, like Berlioz and Wolf, a composer articulate in words. The result is some highly illuminating and felicitous critical writing, notably in the lecture on the sonorous image. Concerning the enormous wealth of color combinations offered by the modern orchestra, for example, Copland remarks that it has been the undoing of the radio or movie orchestrator: "Where there is no true expressive purpose anything goes; in fact, everything goes, and it all goes into the same piece."

The propagandist for contemporary music complains that reverence for the classics keeps the public from listening to the music of its own time, and quotes similar statements from the address by E. J. Dent on the occasion of his receiving an honorary doctorate from Harvard in 1936. Harvard was honoring the scrupulous scholar of the books on opera; but on the public's attitude to new music Dent tossed around myths and fantasies that should have led Harvard to demand the return of its doctorate.

Observing that "in the days of Handel and Mozart nobody wanted old music; all audiences demanded the newest opera or the newest concerto, as we now naturally demand the newest play and the newest novel," Dent asked why in music today we demanded the old and were hostile to the new. One reason was the reverence for the classics, which he suspected began in England at the Handel commemoration of 1784 (nothing about Germany). And there was also a change in musical public. "In Handel's day there was in all European countries an inner ring of cultivated connoisseurs who were the direct patrons of the composers," whereas "the bourgeois public of the nineteenth century had no tradition of connoisseurship. It wanted to be startled and amused rather than to experience intellectual enjoyment. And it had no sense of patronage. The great people knew that they wanted great art and knew that they had to pay a great price for it; the small people wanted to get their great art without paying for it, or at least without paying more than the absolute minimum."

This was Dent's formulation of the myth of the golden age of eighteenth-century patronage. The fact was patronage by an aristocracy of birth and rank; the myth converts this into patronage by an aristocracy of mind, spirit, and taste; and similarly it converts the change from the eighteenth-century aristocratic to the nineteenth-century bourgeois public into a change from an educated, cultivated, enlightened public to an uneducated, uncultivated, unenlightened one. Actually patronage of the arts was part of the ritual of aristocratic existence; and while Haydn was lucky in having an Esterhazy, one need only read Mozart's letters to learn how far the noble patrons of his time, all the way up to the emperor Joseph II, were from knowing they wanted great art and had to pay a great price for it. The truth is that the patronage system was merely one set-up for the creation and performance and hearing of music—one that worked well for some musicians and badly for others; and that it was followed by a different set-up for achieving the same things, which also worked well for some musicians and badly for others. In this set-up the new bourgeois public attended concerts for the most part under no other compulsion than its interest in the music—in large measure the enlightened interest of the educated, cultivated people many of its members were. It listened to the old music which the new widely distributed printed editions now made it possible to perform; but it listened also to the music that was newly composed; and it continued to listen to both old and new all through the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. If, therefore, at that point it began to refuse to listen to the new, the reason cannot have been excessive reverence for the old; it must have been rather the nature of those new works of Schönberg, von Webern, and the rest—the experiences they offered the ear, mind, and spirit, as against the experiences offered by new music until then.

I said "listen"; I should have said "accept," which is what Copland and Dent mean when they argue that Schönberg's is the music for listeners of today as Handel's was the music for listeners of his day—an argument that wasn't needed for Handel's listeners and won't persuade most of Schönberg's. The public does listen to the music of today, as it has an obligation to do; what it does not do is accept all of this music into the art it wants to continue to live with, and this it has no obligation to do.

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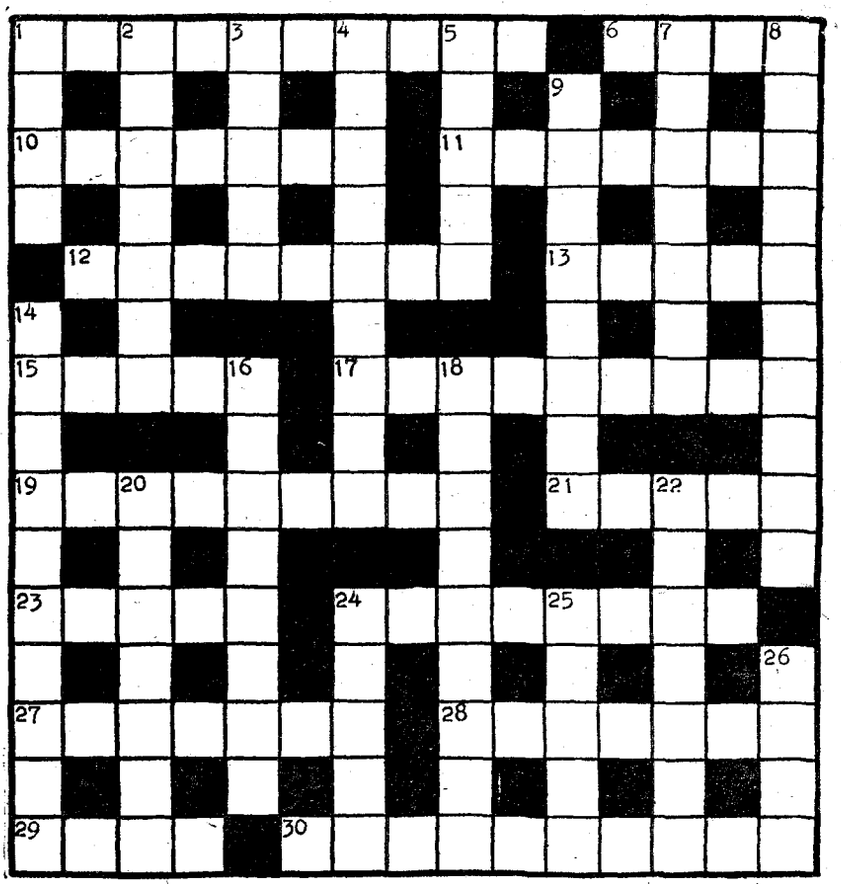

ACROSS

1 What they did out in the tavern song or up in a plane? (6, 4)
6 See 3 down.
10 See 23 across.
11 With 22, this is where one might expect to find Standard Operating Procedure. (7)
12 This fellow had a bull of unusual proportions. (8)
13 Iron bird. (5)
15 Aggregate. (5)
17 Producer of 11, in this case found near third. (9)
19 Second, minute, hour, etc., or just what tells it? (9)
21 This spirit might have got us all out of sorts. (5)
23 and 10. Seems like a well-preserved wall, but still has been broken. (5, 7)
24 See 4 down.
27 Incited to become pretty much the same! (7)
28 See 1 down.
29 Salted fish is extremely colorful about the middle, perhaps. (4)
30 At least if you hit it like a gong---- or catch one on the ride. (5, 5)

DOWN

1 and 28. Certainly not adults of long standing! (4, 7)
2 Not so common in the horse's mouth, but accepted as a matter of course. (7)
3 and 6. The oil our grandfather might have found in the cabinet. (5, 4)
4 and 24 across. Implying no charge for children in the country. (5, 4, 8)
5 A locker is usual at church to contain it. (5)
7 Effuse. (7)
8 A little bit less than a bird run. (If you've ragged things, you might be familiar with it.) (6, 4)
9 Protect a bet on one animal or another. (8)
14 You come and go as part of the vital kind. (10)
16 A plaited pelt, perhaps. (8)
18 Could they be used as notion counters? (9)
20 Typified by Tom, when after Mickey? (7)
22 It might be swell on a type of cutter (7)
24 One whose work is fine when it comes to cutting up the meat or playing with the bones (5)
25 Cleveland said your every one exercises a public trust. (5)
26 Dealt out of 18, and turned into a goddess. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 524

ACROSS:—1 DOUBLE PIANO; 9 STRENGTH; 10 and 18 YELLOWHAMMER; 11 MARSHAL; 12 PLANETS; 14 ASPENS; 15 ECCE HOMO; 17 and 20 SHOPPING CENTER; 22 EMPOWER; 24 OUTSIDE; 26 and 25 GENERATORS; 27 OCTAGONS; 28 MALTESE CATS.

DOWN:—2 OVERSLEEP; 3 and 23 BEGGAR'S OPERA; 4 ECHO; 5 IDYLLIC; 6 NYLON; 7 STRAWS; 8 BOTTOM; 13 WEDGE; 16 HINDSIGHT; 19 INEXACT; 20 CAUSTIC; 21 ENDING.

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(Continued from inside front cover)

ember of life in those of our people who are not already shouting death. And yet writers too have entered the symbolistic maze that speaks of life and beauty in the tongue of a tortured spastic. No one sings; instead, they sob and whine. Which is not to say they shouldn't. . . . Cry with emotion, yes, cry with sadness, with joy, for love, for its loss, but as a release, as the Greeks did. From the crying will come strength, awareness, and the joy of life. Nothing can so impress one with the nobility of life and living as the most terrible of all Greek tragedies, "Prometheus Bound."

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Did I blame them? Certainly not. I liked living in a foxhole and I enjoyed the noisy game we artillerymen played with the sons of those decent, steadily employed Germans. As for the Jews—well, in a concentration camp one is spared the horrors of unemployment.

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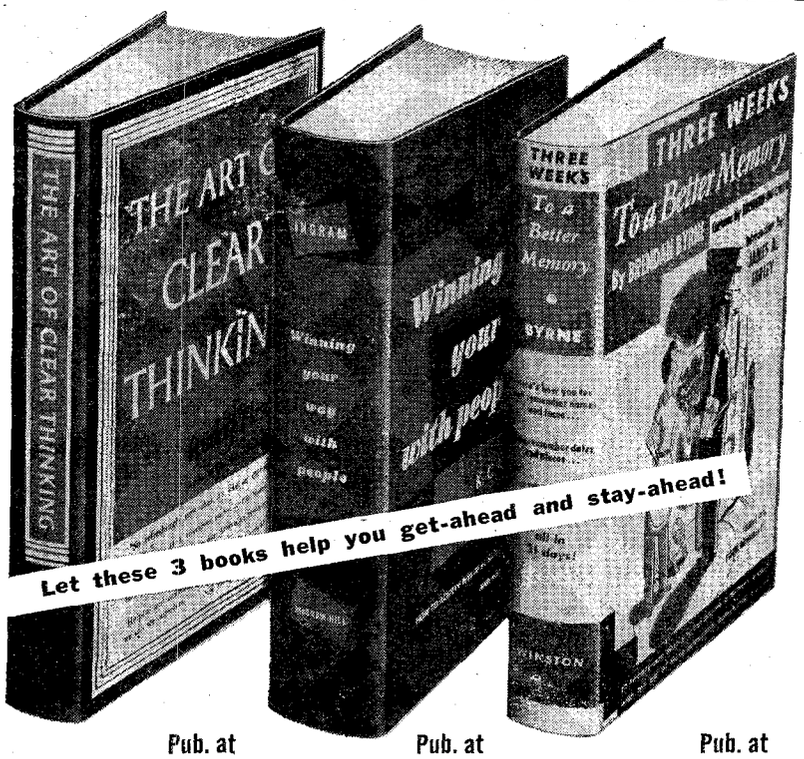
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